

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Subcl 1
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Claim 1 (Previously amended): A method for determining a threshold value $(O_{\max}, O_{\min}, O_{TR})$ serving to limit an output signal of a processing unit into which an input signal has been fed, characterized in that a level of the input signal is determined and that the threshold value $(O_{\max}, O_{\min}, O_{TR})$ is set as a function of the level of the input signal.

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Claim 2 (Previously amended): The method as in claim 1, wherein from the said level a mean level (I) is derived on the basis of which the threshold value $(O_{\max}, O_{\min}, O_{TR})$ is set.

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Claim 3 (Previously amended): The method as in claim 2, wherein the threshold value (O_{TR}) is set by a differential amount (TR_{\max}) above the mean level (I) of the input signal.

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Claim 4 (Previously amended): The method as in claim 2, wherein the mean level (I) is derived from the input signal $s(t)$ along the following formula:

$$I = \frac{1}{T} \times \int_0^T |s(t)| \times dt$$

whereby an averaging function is performed over a time interval T.

1 **Claim 5** (Previously amended): The method as in claim 1, wherein a maximum
2 threshold value (O_{\max}) is established.

1 **Claim 6** (Previously amended): The method as in claim 5, wherein the maximum
2 threshold value (O_{\max}) is so selected as to be equal to an upper comfort level of a hearing-
3 impaired person.

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1 **Claim 7** (Previously amended): The method as in claim 1, wherein a minimum
2 threshold value (O_{\min}) is established.

1 **Claim 8** (Previously amended): The method as in claim 7, characterized in that
2 the minimum threshold value (O_{\min}) is so selected as to be equal to an output level that
3 results from an input level of about 80 dB and the corresponding amplification at that
4 input level that is produced for a hearing-impaired person.

1 **Claim 9** (Previously amended): The method as in claim 3, wherein the differential
2 amount (TRmax) is adjusted along a compression ratio for a hearing-impaired person.

1 **Claim 10** (Original): Application of the method per one of the claims 1 to 9 for
2 operating a hearing aid.

1 **Claim 11** (Previously amended): Application of the method per claim 6 for
2 operation of a hearing aid by a hearing-impaired person.

1 **Claim 12** (Previously amended): A system for implementing the method per
2 claim 1, characterized in that a processing unit is provided which receives an input signal
3 and which permits within the processing unit the determination of a threshold value
4 (O_{\max} , O_{\min} , O_{TR}) for the purpose of limiting the output signal, said threshold value (O_{\max} ,
5 O_{\min} , O_{TR}) being adjustable as a function of the level of the input signal.

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1 **Claim 13** (Previously amended): The system as in claim 12, wherein from the
2 level of the input signal a mean level (I) can be determined by averaging.

1 **Claim 14** (Previously amended): The system as in claim 13, wherein the threshold
2 value (O_{TR}) can be adjusted to a point which by a differential amount (TR_{\max}) is above the
3 mean level (I) of the input signal.

1 **Claim 15** (Previously amended): The system as in claim 14, wherein the mean
2 level (I) can be derived from the input signal $s(t)$ by employing the following formula:

$$I = \frac{1}{T} \times \int_0^T |s(t)| \times dt$$

4 where an averaging function can be performed over a time interval T.

1 **Claim 16** (Previously amended): The system as in claim 12, wherein it

2 permits a maximum threshold value (O_{\max}) to be established.

1 **Claim 17** (Previously amended): The system as in claim 16, wherein the
2 maximum threshold value (O_{\max}) can be selected to be equal to an upper comfort level
3 of a hearing-impaired person.

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1 **Claim 18** (Previously amended): The system as in claim 12, wherein it permits
2 a minimum threshold value (O_{\min}) to be established.

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1 **Claim 19** (Currently amended): The system as in claim 18, wherein the
2 minimum threshold value (O_{\min}) can be selected to be equal to the a mean
3 amplification value for a hearing-impaired person.

1 **Claim 20** (Amended): The system as in claim 13, wherein the differential
2 amount (TR_{\max}) can be adjusted corresponding to a compression ratio for a hearing-
3 impaired person.